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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: GOAM DISPATCHES INVITATION TO ODIHR ELECTION
OBSERVERS

Classified By: CDA A. F. Godfrey for reasons 1.4 (b, d).

¶1. (C) DFM Armen Baibourtian phoned CDA on February 15 to confirm that the invitation for OSCE's ODIHR to monitor elections had been signed and was being sent over immediately to the OSCE Office in Yerevan. Baibourtian said that the letter was signed on February 14 by FM Oskanian and would be sent to the head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan for further transmission to ODIHR's Amb. Strohal. Oskanian's aide, Salpi Ghazarian, had told us February 14 that the letter would go out imminently.

2 (C) In a February 13 meeting, presidential Chief of Staff Armen Gevorgyan told CDA that the invitation was being held up by bureaucratic clearances and would be sent any day. Gevorgyan said the GOAM wanted to wait until National Assembly Speaker Tigran Torosyan returned from his trip to Ashgabat, so that he could send out parliamentary invitations at the same time. Our calls to the National Assembly revealed that parallel invitations that the Speaker was to send out inviting parliamentarians to observe the elections are not yet quite in train.

¶3. (C) The invitation letter, as read to CDA by Baibourtian, reminds Strohal of the GOAM's call for "transparency" and "broad representation" in the Election Observer Mission. Oskanian expressed confidence, however, that the ODIHR mission would demonstrate "expertise, objectivity, and impartiality."

¶4. (C) COMMENT: We had just begun to get anxious that the GOAM had fallen into stonewalling mode on this invitation. It comes in time, however, to allow the full-fledged OSCE/ODIHR mission to proceed on schedule. Oskanian's comment to Strohal in the invitation letter that "in accordance with our agreement," the GOAM looked forward to "transparency" and "broad representation," bears further watching. When these code words first appeared, "transparency" meant a GOAM demand to have access to all of ODIHR's individual observer reports, while "broad representation" meant "not so many pesky Americans."
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